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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4299th meeting of the Security Council, held on 21 March 2001, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in Georgia — Letter dated 17 March 2001 from the Acting Permanent Representative of Ukraine to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2001/242)", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the successful holding of the third meeting on confidence-building measures between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides in Yalta on 15 and 16 March 2001 and the resumption of dialogue between them, and notes the documents signed there (S/2001/242). It hopes that action flowing from the Yalta meeting will lead to a narrowing of the positions of the two sides and stimulate further constructive dialogue aimed at achieving a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict, including a settlement of the political status of Abkhazia within the State of Georgia and other key issues. The Council underlines the contribution that confidence-building measures can bring to the peace process and commends the efforts by the Government of Ukraine in ensuring the success of the Yalta meeting.

"The Security Council reaffirms its support for the efforts by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to enhance contacts at all levels between the Georgian and Abkhaz sides, in close cooperation with the Russian Federation, in its capacity as facilitator, the Group of Friends of the Secretary-General and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

"The Security Council encourages the two sides to engage with renewed commitment in the peace process. The Council notes the stated willingness of the two sides to ensure favourable conditions for the continuation of the peace process, their stated commitment to the non-use of force and their stated determination to intensify efforts in order to create the necessary climate for the voluntary return of internally displaced persons and refugees in secure and dignified conditions. The Council also notes the important contribution that the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia and the Collective Peacekeeping Forces of the Commonwealth of Independent States continue to make in stabilizing the situation in the zone of conflict.

"The Security Council underlines the unacceptability of the holding of self-styled local elections in Abkhazia, Georgia, on 10 March 2001, which it deems illegitimate and unhelpful. The organization of these elections

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represents an additional obstacle to the attempts to reach a comprehensive settlement of the conflict based on international law.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of negotiations on the core political questions of the conflict. In this regard, it looks forward to the briefing to be provided by the Secretary-General on the progress of the political settlement, including on the status of the draft paper his Special Representative intends to submit to the two sides, as referred to in paragraph 16 of its resolution 1339 (2001) of 31 January 2001.

"The Security Council will remain actively seized of the matter and reaffirms its commitment to advancing the peace process."